

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, independent claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 9, which is not rejected in the Office Action. Claim 9 is canceled. Also, non-elected claims 10-12 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application to pursue the subject matter of the non-elected claims. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); and (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (as the amendments incorporate the subject matter of a dependent claim into the independent claim and cancel claims). Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. Information Disclosure Statements

Applicants filed an Information Disclosure Statement on August 18, 2009. The Examiner is requested to acknowledge consideration of the references cited in this Information Disclosure Statement.

Regarding the July 23, 2009 Information Disclosure Statement, the Office Action returns an initialed copy of the Form 1449 with reference numbers 2 and 4 crossed out, asserting that these two references are not in the English language and are not accompanied by a concise explanation of relevance. However, as indicated on page 2 of the July 23, 2009 Information Disclosure Statement, reference numbers 2 and 4 correspond to reference numbers 1 and 5, respectively, which are in the English language. Thus, the submission of reference numbers 2 and 4 complies with 37 CFR §1.98.

II. The Claims Are Patentable

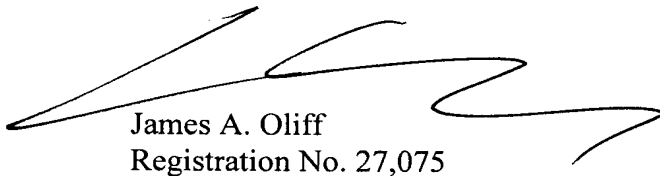
Independent claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 9, as outlined above. Claim 9 is not rejected in the Office Action. The incorporation of claim 9 into claim 1 renders moot all rejections of claims 1-8. Thus, withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-8 is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-8 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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